

EXCURSION TO CHELTENHAM.

FAVOURED by a fine afternoon, about forty members and friends took part in the excursion to Cheltenham on Saturday, 7th October. The route followed was through the Cheltenham Park, thence to the heathy ground beyond. Over fifty species of shrubs and plants were noted in flower or fruit, of which the following are worthy of mention:—The Myrrh Tea-tree, *Leptospermum myrsinoides*, and the Coast Tea-tree, *L. laevigatum*, were flowering in great profusion, as was also the Wedding Bush, *Ricinocarpus pinifolius*. The Blue Squill, *Chamæscilla corymbosa*, looked charming amongst the grass and undergrowth. Of the Leguminosæ, which is well represented in the district, the Hairy Aotus, *Aotus villosa*, Gorse Bitter Pea, *Daviesia ulicina*, Grey Parrot Pea, *Dilwynia cinerascens*, and Late Black Wattle, *Acacia mollissima*, were seen at their best. Three members of the Pimelea family were noted—viz., Dwarf Rice-flower, *Pimelea humilis*, Hairy Rice-flower, *P. phyllicoides*, Downy Rice-flower, *Pimelea octophylla*. Two fine specimens of the Kangaroo Apple, *Solanum aviculare*, proved of great interest to the party. A few patches of the Wild Parsnip, *Didiscus pilosus*, were also observed. This plant has been credited with poisonous properties, but recent investigations have disproved this opinion. Amongst the Compositæ, the Curling Everlasting, *Helichrysum scorpioides*, the Big Billy Buttons, *Craspedia Richea*, and the Large Podolepis, *Podolepis acuminata*, were fairly plentiful. Four members of the Orchidaceæ were collected—viz., the Larger Glossodia, *Glossodia major*, the Spider Orchid, *Caladenia Patersoni*, the Yellow Hood Orchid, *Thelymitra antennifera*, and Tall Diuris, *Diuris longifolia*. The Milkmaids, *Burchardia umbellata*, and the Early Nancy, *Anguillaria (Wurmbea) dioica*, were met with everywhere. Some of the party devoted their attention to pond-life, and Mr. J. Searle has kindly given me the following notes on their captures. He says:—"Although the winter and early spring had been remarkably rainless, and only two weeks had elapsed since practically the first rain fell on the sandy soil of Cheltenham, the shallow depressions were found to be teeming with aquatic life, the beautiful phyllopod, *Enlimnadia dahli*, being the most common and already measuring five-sixteenths of an inch in length. When it is remembered that most of the pools around Cheltenham had been dry for two years or more, the number of specimens taken was most remarkable. The list includes *Enlimnadia dahli*, *Lynceus macleayana*, *Simocephalus gibbosus*, *Ceriodaphnia rotunda*, *Camptocercus*, sp., *Boeckella oblonga*, *Brunella australis*, *Cyclops albicans*, *Cypris leana*, and *Cypridopsis minna*. The larvæ of *Tanytus* and *Chyrononus* were very abundant, while frog-

spawn was hatching in masses everywhere. In the yellow waters of a small dam the elongated bug, *Ranatra*, sp., was found covered with the nymphs of a water-mite, *Hydrachna*, sp." It is to be regretted, from a naturalist's point of view, that this splendid collecting-ground, so close to Melbourne, is yearly becoming more circumscribed by the advance of building operations, and in the course of a few years will practically be lost for ever.—J. R. TOVEY.

EXHIBITION OF WILD-FLOWERS.

WHEN the announcement was made that the committee of the Field Naturalists' Club had decided to hold the 1916 exhibition of wild-flowers at the Melbourne Town Hall on Tuesday, 3rd October, many members were disposed to regard the determination with misgivings. Yet, in recalling the wealth of flowers displayed in the hall, and the enthusiastic and appreciative concourse that surged round and about them, and later vied for their possession, how little occasion there was to fear that the undertaking would prove what members and their friends willed it to be—an unqualified success.

Preparations for the reception of the flowers were begun at the Town Hall on Monday afternoon, 2nd October, by Messrs. J. Gabriel, F. Pitcher, and J. Searle, and by 10 p.m. the decorative scheme and the arrangement of the display tables and kiosks were satisfactorily completed. Shortly after 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning a number of skilled workers began operations on the floral consignments as they arrived, and by noon had burdened the tables with an infinite variety of our native flowering plants and shrubs.

The Lord Mayor, Sir David Hennessy, in formally declaring the exhibition open, at 3 p.m., congratulated the Club on its fine display of Australian wild-flowers, which were a revelation to him, and undoubtedly to many others. The proceeds arising from the display were to be devoted to a commendable object—the Y.M.C.A. National Appeal—and he hoped the result would be alike satisfactory to the Club and to the Association.

The president, Mr. F. Pitcher, in outlining the aims and objects of the Club, expressed the opinion that but for the unfavourable weather that had prevailed during the week preceding the exhibition a brighter and a much more representative display of the native flora would have resulted.

All of the exhibits contributed by members or forwarded by their friends were admirable, and it is to be regretted that lack of space precludes according them individually the measure of praise their beauty and variety claim; yet it would seem a grave omission to refrain from reference to the chief